Chad Watson 02/10/2010

Humanities

Louis Pasteur (1822- 1895)

Louis Pasteur was born in Dole in the Jura region of France on the 27th December 1822. Pasteur was a French chemist and biologist, who dedicated his life to become the father of Germ theory, and invented the process of pasteurisation. His father was a tanner. After several years research and teaching in Dijon and Strasbourg, in 1854, Pasteur was appointed professor of chemistry at the University of Lille. He was able to demonstrate that organisms such as bacteria were responsible for souring wine and beer (he later extended his studies to prove that milk was the same), and that the bacteria could be removed by boiling and then cooling the liquid.

Pasteur then undertook experiments to find where these bacteria came from, and was able to prove that they were introduced from the environment. This was disputed by scientists who believed they could spontaneously generate. In 1864, the French Academy of Sciences accepted Pasteur's results. By 1865, Pasteur was director of scientific studies at the École Normale, where he had studied. Pasteur's various investigations convinced him of the rightness of the germ theory of disease, which holds that germs attack the body from outside. He is best known for his work on the development of vaccines for rabies. In 1888, a special institute was founded in Paris for the treatment of diseases. Pasteur was its director until his death on 28 September 1895. He was a national hero and was given a state funeral.